

Listing of the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method for producing a fertilizer, comprising the step of
(a) obtaining a ferment from fermentation of bacteria wherein the fermentation is stopped before bacteria get into dormant stage in a fermentation medium, said bacterial having no lag time upon re-hydration; and
(b) spraying [[a]] the ferment comprising active bacteria in a fermentation medium onto a granular fertilizer, said ferment being used at a rate of at most 3 liters of ferment per ton of fertilizer, and wherein said ferment is obtained from a fermentation stopped before bacteria get into a dormant stage and wherein said bacteria have no lag time upon re-hydration.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the ferment is used at a rate of 0.5 to 2.0 liter of ferment per ton of granular fertilizer.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the ferment is cooled down prior to being mixed with the granular fertilizer.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the ferment is cooled down to about 0°C to 12°C.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the ferment is cooled down to about 0°C to 5°C.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the ferment of active bacteria is obtained by fermentation of said bacteria until the end of the exponential growth phase.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein fermentation is allowed to proceed until a concentration of bacteria of at least 10^8 cells/ml is obtained.
8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the fermentation medium at the end of the exponential growth phase contains nutrients for said bacteria.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein additional fermentation medium is sprayed on the granular fertilizer.
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the bacteria adheres to the granular fertilizer.
12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the ferment is sprayed onto a binding agent, said binding agent being thereafter mixed with the granular fertilizer.
13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the binding agent is selected from the group consisting of talc, flour, starch, sugar, and powdered milk.
14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the ferment is subjected to a step of concentration prior to being mixed with the granular fertilizer.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of concentration comprises at least one of centrifugation, dia-centrifugation, filtration and dia-filtration.

16. (Currently amended) A fertilizer produced by the method of obtaining a ferment from fermentation of bacteria wherein the fermentation is stopped before bacteria get into dormant stage in a fermentation medium thereby producing active bacteria, said bacteria having no lag time upon re-hydration and spraying [[a]] the ferment comprising the active bacteria in a fermentation medium onto a granular fertilizer,~~said ferment being used~~ at a rate of at most 3 liters of ferment per ton of fertilizer,~~and wherein said ferment is obtained from a fermentation stopped before bacteria get into a dormant stage and have no lag time upon re-hydration,~~ said fertilizer comprising:

- a) an agglomerate chemical substance containing at least one source of at least one of nitrogen, phosphate and potassium for use as granular fertilizer on crops or soils; and
- b) bacteria that are,

~~wherein said bacteria are being~~ active upon re-hydration without lag time.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously presented) The fertilizer of claim 16, wherein the bacteria have been dehydrated prior to getting into a latent stage or prior to sporulation.

19. (Previously presented) The fertilizer of claim 16, wherein the bacteria are mixed with a binding agent.

20. (Previously presented) The fertilizer of claim 19, wherein the binding agent is selected from the group consisting of talc, flour, starch, sugar, and powdered milk.

21. (Previously presented) The enhanced fertilizer of claim 16 further comprising nutrients for the bacteria.

22. (Currently amended) A method of producing a bacteria and fertilizer composition comprising:
providing a granular fertilizer;
providing a bacterial ferment obtained from fermentation of bacteria in fermentation medium and the ferment stopped prior to the bacteria entering a dormant stage, said ferment comprising active bacteria having no lag time upon re-hydration ~~in a fermentation medium in which fermentation of the active bacteria in the ferment is stopped prior to the bacteria entering a dormant stage;~~ and
spraying the bacterial ferment onto the granular fertilizer at a rate of less [[that]] than 3 liters bacterial ferment per ton of granular fertilizer thereby producing a bacteria and fertilizer composition ~~and wherein said ferment is obtained from a fermentation stopped before bacteria get into a dormant stage and wherein said bacteria have no lag time upon re-hydration.~~

23. (Cancelled)